Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) Report 1645 - February 20 2009

Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1645 with a release date of Friday, February 20th, 2009 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a Q-S-T.  Hams down-under continue their relief work in the wake of this year deadly bush fires, amateurs in Brunei set up a disaster communications network, the K5D operation comes on the air, Newsline looks for speakers for this years Hamvention Ham Radio Town Meeting  and a 4 meter E-M-E record is set.  Yes, we did say 4 meters and you can find out the details on Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) report number 1645 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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RESCUE RADIO:  WICEN CONTINUES TO ASSIST IN VK BUSH FIRES

Ham radio response to Australia's bush fires continues.  Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, is in the newsroom with the latest information from down-under:

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Australia's Wireless Institute Civil Emergency Network, better known as WICEN, continues to provide communications links in a number of affected bushfire areas.

WICEN in Victoria state and the State Disaster Plan Emergency Communications Organization were both put on standby alert on Saturday  February 7th.  This shaped up to be the worst day since Australia's Ash Wednesday Bushfire disaster of 1983.

WICEN was fully activated on February 9th. That was two days into the Black Saturday bushfire.  This, with an initial request for operators in Kinglake region north-east of Melbourne.  This was one of the worst hit areas and had no communications or power. Operators were also needed in Alexandra.

The role of the WICEN hams was to provide links on a 24 hour basis between Kinglake and the Alexandra municipal emergency coordination center for the Shire Council.  The operators headed for Alexandra had to reach their assignment via a long route due to road closures. Those with duty at Kinglake needed to be escorted through hazardous road conditions from the staging area at the Whittlesea Showgrounds.  WICEN hams also assisted in the restoration of the local municipal two-way radio service in the Kinglake area.

Amateur radio links were made with another the town.  That of Narbethong with two operators maintaining them.

The next element of the WICEN deployment was at McAdam's Hill.  There, where two operators provided health and welfare communications for a team of firefighters at their base camp.

Two skeds, one at 10:00 and 21:30 hours, are held daily on 3.6 MHz.  Those

nets help to keep emergency responders up to date and share information.  They also enable  a check on the welfare of emergency communications operators in the field. A portable repeater is in service.

Clearly this disaster is far from over and we will have more in future Amateur Radio Newsline reports.

In the newsroom in Los Angeles, I'm Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, for the Amateur Radio Newsline.

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A we go to air, the death toll from these brush fire has already exceeded 180.  One man has been arrested and will likely be charged with starting at least one of the blazes.  (Amateur Radio Victoria WICEN)

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RESCUE RADIO:  GEORGIA SKYWARN ACTIVATES FOR SEVERE WEATHER OUTBREAK

This just in. The National Weather Service office in Peachtree City, Georgia, was quite busy on Wednesday, February 18th and a Skywarn net was equally active as well.

According to Lloyd Colston, KC5FM, an alert was called at about 3:45 P.M. local time as warnings went out about the possibility of tornadoes and other severe weather moving through the area.

Amateur radio operations were brought on line from the National Weather Service office.  These included an Echolink net, a high frequency voice net on 3.975 MHz, and the use of the Automatic Packet Reporting System on 144.39 MHz.  Here's a sample of the VHF communications that went on during the storm:

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Actual ham radio emergency communications audio.

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KC5FM says that baseball size hail along with damaging winds were reported by hams to the National Weather Service office.   More on the hams involved in this severe weather response is on-line at www.georgiakywarn.com.
 (KC5FM)

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RESCUE RADIO: BRUNEI HAMS SET UP EMCOMM STATION

The Brunei Darussalam Amateur Radio Association has taken on the role of providing assistance in time of national emergencies.  This by establishing an emergency communication network using amateur radio to reach remote areas of that nation that have conventional communication system breakdowns.  According to a club release the organization has installed a ham radio station at the Brunei National Disaster Management Center.

This station is manned by members of association.  It is designed to receive reports from the remote villages in the and pass them on to first responders and other disaster assistance providers.

It should be noted that the current bad weather and associated disasters have hit numerous Brunei residents depriving some around the country of their minimal life essentials.  (Southgate)

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RESCUE RADIO:  VE4DJ NAMED MANATOBA EMERGENFCY MEASURES ORGANIZATIOIN DIRECTOR

Still with rescue radio news, word that Don Mackinnon, VE4DJ, has become the Director of Planning for the Manitoba Canada's Emergency Measures Organization.  A lawyer and former police officer, Mackinnon had been the Radio Amateurs of Canada Manitoba Section Emergency Coordinator for some 12 years.

Besides his many other contributions to amateur radio, VE4DJ chaired the Radio Amateurs of Canada National Training Resource Group that was commissioned by the organization's Vice President for Field Services in August, 2006.  (RAC)

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REAKING DX NEWS:  DESECHEO ISLAND K5D IS ON THE AIR

The long awaited K5D Desecheo Island DXpedition is now on the air.  The QSO count was slightly under 10,000 in the first 24 hours.  This, with only two stations in operation most of that time.

Getting to Desecheo took the operators a bit longer than anticipated. This,  due to higher-than-expected winds which delayed helicopter trips from the transport boat to the island campsite. This meant that the group was unable to complete their planned for full setup on Thursday, February 12th.  That problem is well behind them

Meantime the Caribbean Amateur Radio Group is planing to hold a satellite Q-S-O with the Desecheo Island DXpedition team.  The contact had  planned for this past Friday, February 20th, using the AO-51 satellite.

So far the K5D has operation has exceeded 40,000 contacts in the short time it has been on the air.  We will have more DX related news later on in this weeks Amateur Radio Newsline report.  (Press release)

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RADIO RECORD:  THE FIRST 4 METER EME CONTACT CLAIMED

It could be a world record on the 4 meter band.  This, as Andy Kissack, GD0TEP, on the Isle on Man reports on a Earth - Moon - Earth or EME contact which that he says could prove to be a first.

Andy says on his website that following tests carried out by himself and GD4GNH back in 2006, he finally found a suitable station to try for an EME

contact on the 4 meter band.  As a result, Andy and ZS6WAB in South Africa tried an EME sked on Friday evening, February 13th.  Unfortunately, his mast mounted transmit and receive relay failed due to water ingress.

Their 2nd try was the morning of February 15th.  Visibility of the Moon at Andy's location came at 00:38 UTC and at 01:34 he received his first moon echo.  About a minute later, Andy and ZS6WAB  completed what both operators believe to be the world's first 4meter  EME contact using the low noise JT65a digital mode.  Screen shots of the QSO are on line at www dot gd0tep dot com.  (VHF Reflector)

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REGULATORY: INTERIM FCC CHAIRMAN COPPS MAKES FCC INFO MORE ACCESSABLE

Interim Federal Communications Commission Chairman Michael Copps is trying to make communication within the agency and between the FCC and the public more accessible.

Radio World reports that the FCC now holds a weekly meeting of bureau heads and representatives from the commissioner's offices.  This to permit an ongoing dialogue between the various bureaus.  He is also setting regularly scheduled dates for Commission  meetings.

Chairman Copps has also begun a new program of on-passing information from his office to the other commissioners and bureaus at the same time.  This he says permits everyone concerned with a given matter a better idea of what's taking place.   (RW)

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BREAK 1

 From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the KD6LC repeater serving Guerenville, California.

(5 sec pause here)

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BREAKING NEWS:  NC HAMS WIN EXCLUSUION FROM MOBILE CELLPHONE BAN

North Carolina lawmakers are again considering a ban on cell phone use while driving, but Amateur Radio operators in the state would be specifically exempted, thanks to an amendment requested by Bob Conder K4RLC, the ARRL State Government Liaison officer.

The bill was debated on Tuesday by the state Senate Commerce Committee. State Senator William Purcell, a co-sponsor of the bill, told Conder that Amateur Radio was already exempt because it wasn't covered by the definition of "mobile phone". Conder asked for a specific exemption anyway, fearing that law enforcement officers on the street wouldn't make the distinction between a cell phone and ham radio. The amendment, which reads "This term does not include two-way mobile radio transmitters or receivers

used by licensees of the Federal Communications Commission in the Amateur Radio Service" was accepted without discussion.

During committee debate, one Senator did ask if the bill would cover Nextel style "push-to-talk" - operation that is similar to Amateur Radio. After that concept was explained to some senators who didn't understand it, the bill's sponsor said it "probably would" be included in the ban.

Similar bills have been introduced in North Carolina over the past few years, and all have been defeated or died in committee. A similar fate is expected for this bill, but last year the state did enact a ban for drivers under 18.

Reporting for Newsline, I'm Gary Pearce KN4AQ. (KN4AQ)

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IOWA PROPOSES BANNING ALL MOBILE WIRELESS COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Iowa could become the first state to completely ban all forms of wireless mobile in motion communications that is not operated hands free. A measure being brought before the Iowa legislature will prohibit the driver of a motor vehicle from operating or using a cellular telephone or any other wireless communication device without using a hands free adapter while operating a motor vehicle on a street or highway.

The only exceptions are for emergency situations when the use of a handheld phone or device is to call 911 or contact law enforcement authorities or an emergency response agency. Nor does the bill prohibit a driver from using such devices when the motor vehicle is at a complete stop off the roadway.

No exemptions are included for law enforcement, fire, rescue or any other certified first responders. As written, the measure appears to also ban commercial two-way radio, GMRS, amateur and even 11 meter CB. The proposed legislation establishes a fine of $30 as the penalty for a first offense.

The Iowa measure is designated as House File 9. Hams and other two way radio interests will need to act quickly to secure exemptions before the proposal becomes an Iowa state law. (AC0LM)

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ENFORCEMENT: WINTER HAVEN FLORIDA PIRATE OPERATOR ARRESTED

Deputies in Polk County Florida along with the FCC and the Winter Haven Police have arrested Anthony Davis for unlicensed broadcasting. This, after searching his Winter Haven home.

Detectives say that they found audio mixers, microphones, and other station equipment at his residence. Also found was a 100 watt transmitter that they say Davis was using to broadcast reggae music station on 87.9 FM.

Davis called his station format "One Love Radio". He has been charged with unlawful transmission on a radio frequency which is a third degree felony under Florida state law. The raid on Davis home was the result of complaints from a local Orlando TV station. (TampaBay News)

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HAM RADIO AND THE WWW:  GOOD CHANGES AT QRZ.COM

Some changes to the look and feel of the giant QRZ.com ham radio website.  Effective immediately, the Ham Radio Announcements area has been renamed Contests, DXpeditions and Special Events and is directly clickable from the home page menu bar as the Events button.  Also, the Hamfests and Event Calendar has been renamed simply to Hamfest Calendar and now has a direct menu button from the front page.  (QRZ.com)

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THE SOCIAL SCENE:  PACIFICON AND EMCOMMWEST MERGE

Some major changes coming to ham radio conventions west of the Continental Divide.  This as Pacificon announces it merger with the Reno, Nevada, based Emcommwest.  Don Carlson, KQ6FM, is in Reno and has the details:

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Prior to this year, Emcommwest has been an emergency communications specialty convention, here in Reno, Nevada during may and Pacificon, home to the pacific division convention in San Ramon, California during October. well, this year, they will combine into one giant amateur radio convention as Emcommwest hosts Pacificon, which will be this year's pacific division convention.

According to Director Bob Vallio, W6RGG, this is a merger that will bring the best of amateur radio to one location for the enjoyment of everyone.  The dates are May 1st to the 3rd at the Circus-Circus hotel resort and casino in downtown Reno.

We'll have license testing, the Reno spring Ham-Swap on Saturday morning, a Friday night welcome barbecue, and of course, our Saturday night banquet featuring our special guest, former FCC enforcement chief Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH. keynote speaker will be Steve Ewald, WV1X, the ARRL's public service manager from Newington, who will join pacific division leadership officials as they take part in the ARRL forum.

There will also be sessions, seminars and forums and an expanded vendor hall, with a little something for everyone!

Online registration begins on Saturday, February 21st, and vendor registration forms are available now.

As the event director, I would like to personally join Director Vallio and everyone in the Pacific division in thanking the members of the Mt. Diablo Amateur Radio Club for their years of service in putting on a top notch convention, and for their help with this transition.  We will look forward to seeing everyone this may for what could prove to be the best convention this side of Dayton!

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, this is Don Carlson, KQ6FM in Reno.

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The Combined Emcommwest 09 and Pacificon 09 will take place on May 1st to the 3rs at the Circus- Circus Hotel and Casino in Reno, Nevada. More information is on-line at www.emcommwest.org. (KQ6FM, ARNewsline(tm))

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THE SOCIAL SCENE: SPEAKERS NEEDED FOR HAMVENTION TOWN MEETING

If you have ever dreamed of being a speaker at the famed Dayton Hamvention, here's your chance to make that dream come true.

Each year Amateur Radio Newsline produces and hosts the Ham Radio Town Meeting at Hamvention. This year we plan to explore how of becoming a ham as a teen or pre-teen has influenced ones adult career. And while many of the speakers slots have already been filled we are still looking for a few more folks wanting to share the story of how ham radio helped them decide what to do in life. We especially are looking for those who are involved in medicine, education and the performing arts but we will give consideration to anyone who would be interested in speaking.

OK. There are a few caveats. First off, you are own your own as far as travel and accommodations. The Hamvention no longer pays the expenses for speakers. Also, you will only get 10 minutes to tell your story after which you will be expected to answer questions from the audience at the Hara Arena and those on-line in their homes.

This years Ham Radio Town Meeting takes place on Saturday, May 16th at the Dayton Hamvention. If you are interested in being a presenter please e-mail us an outline of your proposed presentation to newsline@arnewsline.org.

Oh yes. Please be sure to include your phone number and other contact information. We will look over all submissions and get back to you if what you have to say fits with the goal of this years Hamvention Ham Radio Town Meeting. We look forward to hearing from you. (ARNewsline(tm))

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: IARU ELECTS NEW PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT

Some names in the news. First is Timothy S. Ellam, who holds the calls VE6SH and G4HUA and who is the new President of the International Amateur Radio Union. Ellam replaces former ARRL president Larry Price, W4RA, who has served as IARU President since 1998 and has decided to retire at the end of his current term in May.

Ellam is a long time Canadian radio amateur. He lives in Calgary, Alberta, and until now has served as Vice President of the IARU.

Elected as the new IARU Vice President is Ole Garpestad, LA2RR. Garpestad, a resident of Oslo, Norway. He is presently President of the IARU Region 1. Both men will serve a five year term beginning on May 9th. (RAC)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: EI3IO JOINS IARU EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMITTEE

The Irish Radio Transmitters Society or IRTS says that Dave Court, EI3IO, has been invited to join the International Amateur Radio Union's Region 1 External Relations Committee as an expert adviser. The External Relations Committee is the International Amateur Radio Union's Region 1 interface with the CEPT and other radio regulatory bodies on matters of importance to the interests of the amateur service such as spectrum requirements and licensing. The IRTS says that it knows that Court's experience and advice will be of great assistance to furthering the work of the External Relations Committee in Region 1 of the IARU. (IRTS)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: AMSAT ANNOUNCES BEST FIST OF SKN ON OSCAR

And some callsigns in the news. These are the two dozen hams that each received at least one Best Fist nomination from someone the stations worked during Straight Key Night on OSCAR 2009.

The list is to long to mention each call here. AMSAT says that thanks in large part to the popularity of the AO-51 ham satellite, that there were a record 24 Best Fist winners this year. Participation outside North America was especially high, especially in Asia. (ANS)

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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WITH ARNEWSLINE: SOME THANK-YOU'S FOR MAY 2008

Ladies and gentlemen, with some thank you's for our listeners whose donations keep these newscasts coming your way, here's our Support Fund Administrator Andy Jarema, N6TCQ:

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In the month of May 2008 we heard from the Dayton Amateur Radio Association; William Smith, W7GHT in Boise, ID; Gregory Hayes, Rick Rau, KO6FR, and the Silverado Amateur Radio Society in Napa, CA; Nate Brightman, K6OSC, in Long Beach; Brad Berryhill, WA6JJB in Anaheim Hills; Scott Dicks, KF6PIH in Los Angeles. Lastly, our incredible friends at the Anchorage ARC, who always seem to time it correctly to pull our hand away from grabbing the anode of the final tube.

Also, regular contributors Benton Bonney, Joseph Bartzi, Jr., William Walters, and Stephen Perluss and the South Orange Amateur Radio Association.

Next time we will acknowledge all of our PayPal contributors from May 2008. Just a reminder to you- if you do use our incredibly easy link to PayPal from our website at arnewsline.org, be sure to include your callsign in the memo field, so that we can include it on the air. Or you can also contribute at our regular support fund address given at the end of this broadcast.

I'm Andy Jarema, N6TCQ, and we thank you for listening, and for your support.
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More with Andy in future Newsline reports. (Newsline Support Fund)

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THE CHANGING OF THE GUARD: CANCER REAEARCHER JOHN KANZIUS, K3TUP - SK.

I'm Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, back with the sad news that a ham who used his knowledge of RF garnered through amateur radio to develop a possible cure for cancer has died due to complications associated with the disease. John Kanzius, K3TUP, passed away on Wednesday morning, February 18th in a Florida hospital from pneumonia while undergoing chemotherapy for b-cell leukemia. While he had no formal medical training K3TUP was described by Discover magazine as one of the world's 50 most promising scientists. His family has been quoted as saying that his research in curing cancer will continue. John Kanzius was only age 64. Amateur Radio Newsline will have a complete profile on his life and his career next week. (ARNewsline(tm), W2VU, others)

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EMERGING TECHNOLOGY: DIGI COMM ALGORITHM MAY PREVENT DRUG INTERACTIONS

Math used in radio propagation may also help those taking multiple medications to, avoid drug interaction. David Black, KB4KCH, is in our Southeast Bureau with more:

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Researchers at the Burnham Institute for Medical Research have shown that search algorithms used in digital communications can help scientists identify effective multi-drug combinations.

Using what's known as the stack sequential algorithm that was developed for digital communications, a team of scientists searched for optimal drug combinations. This algorithm can integrate information from different sources, including biological measurements and model simulations.

This differs from the classic systems biology approach by having search algorithms rather than explicit quantitative models as the central element. The variability of biological systems is the fundamental motivation for this strategy.

The study, led by Giovanni Paternostro and was published in the December

26, 2008, issue of P Computational Biology magazine.

This work was funded by the Ellison Medical Foundation, National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation.

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The number of lives that can be saved by the results of this study could be into the thousands each year. (Science OnLine, Burnham Institute)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: KAGAYUKI HAMSAT LISTENERS NEEDED TO HELP FINFD THE BIRD

Turning to ham radio from space, word that nothing has been heard from Japan's Kagayaki amateur radio satellite since it was launched last month. The bird should be transmitting a beacon on 437.375 MHz and the controllers of Kagayaki are asking anyone with the ability to monitor that frequency to do so and to report back if the satellite is heard. More information on the satellite and how you can help is on the website whose U-R-L can be found at the Kagayaki English web site at www.sorun.co.jp/e_kagayaki/top.html (JN1GKZ)

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WORLDBEAT: TWO INTERNATIONAL MUSEUMS WEEKENDS IN JUNE

The International Museums Weekend special event will be a double weekend event in 2009. Operations and will take place take place on both the 20th and 21st of June and again on the 27th and 28th . All radio amateurs are encouraged to participate in this event by setting up stations in their local museums. Full details of the event can be found on the International Museums Weekend website. Its in cyberspace at www.ukradioamateur.uk/imw (RSGB)

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ON THE AIR: EDDYSTONE USERS GROUP TO ACTIVATE GX3EUG and GX7EUG

The Eddystone User Group will take to the air with special event calls GX3EUG and GX7EUG on Sunday March 1st from the site of the former World War 2 Royal Air Force base at Sutton Bridge, Lincolnshire in the United Kingdom. This may be the last time they get to operate from the location as the site is due to be developed shortly into a vast industrial estate. Listen out for the two calls on both 80 and 40 meters and QSL as directed by the operator you make contact with. (Southgate)

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DX

In D-X, word that SP2JMR and SP2JMB will be on the air portable 3B9 from Rodrigues Island between April 1st and the 8th. They will then be on from Mauritius between April 9th and the 17th. Activity is expected to be on all bands using CW and SSB. QSL as directed by the operators on the air.

A group of German operators will be active as CT9L March 7th and 8th during the ARRL DX SSB Contest. QSL via DJ6QT. Outside the contest period the operators will probably sign their own home callsigns portable CT3.  For those contacts QSL as directed on the air.

A team of nine New Zealand operators will be activating Chatham Island in March. The team leaders are ZL2AL and ZL2AAA.  ZL3JT in Christchurch is the designated pilot station for the operation.  Look for operations on 160 through 10 meters using CW, SSB, RTTY. Although ZL7 is not particularly rare it still is in the top 100 needed for DXCC. As such it still generates quite a bit of  activity on the bands.

Lastly, members of the HA5KHC high school radio club in Budapest are active through March 31st as HA130HALLO.  The unique callsign is on the air to celebrate the 130th anniversary of first appearance of the telephone in Hungary.  Operations are to be on all bands mainly using CW, but theres is said to be some activity on SSB, PSK and RTTY. QSL via HA5KHC via the bureau.  No electronic QSL's are being accepted by this operation.

Above from various DX news sources.

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THAT FINAL ITEM:  EMCOMM HAMSTER POWER

And finally this week, hams involved in future emergency communications set-ups where no form of power is available might want to plan on bringing some hamsters along.  Yes, we said hamsters.  Amateur Radio Newsline's Mark Abramowicz, NT3V, has the rest of the story:

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Researchers at the Georgia Institute of Technology are, indeed, looking at hamsters as subjects capable of producing electricity by wearing a power-generating jacket - if you will - that responds to the animal's movements.

Wait! Don't tune us out yet.

This is real.

And, in fact, it's research supported by your tax dollars courtesy of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency - also known as DARPA, the Department of Energy, and the Air Force.

According to the online news service, Science Daily, at the heart of the experiment is use of nanotechnology to harness this new source of energy.

The researchers claim that they can convert any mechanical disturbance or even irregular biomechanical energy into electricity.

Let's see, so that means a little hamster, fitted with one of those special jackets (wonder how they keep the darn things on) runs on a wheel in his cage and produces small amounts of electricity. Maybe enough to spark something.. hmm.

Well, that's as far as I'm going to go as far on this science lesson.

Oh, wait, there's more!

The researchers say that even tapping on your Blackberry or cell phone key pad can produce small amounts of electricity.

Does that mean I have to put one of those funny nano jackets on my finger?

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Mark Abramowicz, NT3V, in Philadelphia.

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The bottom line:  Those furry little creatures that some kids have as pets may one day be the answer to all of our emergency communications power needs.  Then again maybe not.  (Adapted from Science Daily)

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB, the Southgate News and Australia's W-I-A News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm).  Our e-mail address is newsline@arnewsline.org.  More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org.  You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), P.O. Box
 660937,
Arcadia, California 91066.

A reminder that the nominating period for the 2009 Amateur Radio Newsline Young Ham of the Year Award is now open.  Complete details are on our website at www.arnewsline.org  Just scroll down to the words "2009 YHOTY Nominations Now Open" and click for more information and an official nominating form.

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Jim Damron, N8TMW, and I'm Jeff Clark, K8JAC, saying 73 and we thank you for listening.

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